A LETTER

Written by a

MINISTER,

For the Satisfaction of a

PERSON

Doubting in

RELIGION.

Shewn to be Unsatisfactory.

LONDON, Printed by *Henry Hills*, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty for His Houshold and Chappel. 1686.

A LETTER

TO THE READER.

I *Know it will be expected by the Reader, I ſhould inform him what it was that occaſion'd theſe following Papers.* J. W. *a young man of* Preſton *in* Lancaſhire, *fell into ſome doubts about the main concern of his Soul, Whether he had hitherto the right* Faith, *or were in the true* Church. *Mr.* T. B. *whoſe Pariſhioner he was, us'd his beſt endeavours to diſſwade him from embracing the Catholic Communion. For which I ſhould not diſcommend him, for it was preciſe duty in him, in caſe he verily judg'd the* Negatives, *in which* Proteſtants *differ from* Catholics *were* True, *and that he had any ſolid Grounds for judging ſo. Nay, he offer'd too to diſpute with any* Roman-Catholic *before him, to ſettle his Doubts, and give him ſatisfaction that the* Proteſtant Religion *was True: which was a very fair Proffer, had it been as candidly perform'd. Whereupon I was invited to give him a meeting; And when I came, to make the Diſ-*

pute ſhort, I began with the firſt Principle in Controverſie, The Rule of Faith. *I told him, that all our Conteſt was ſumm'd up in this one Enquiry, What it was that Chriſt and his Apoſtles taught; and that if the Rule which was to acquaint us with, that were not abſolutely or infallibly Certain, all our Faith muſt by conſequence be Uncertain, and might poſſibly be an Errour. I alledg'd, that all* His *Rule that grounded* His *Perſwaſions about what was* Faith, *depended on Interpretations of Scripture, made by himſelf or the* Proteſtant Church; *both which being confeſſedly fallible, or poſſible to be deceiv'd, he might poſſibly, (that is, perhaps was actually) in an Errour as to all his Faith for ought he or they knew. When I expected an Anſwer, he ſtept to his Study, and fetch't down a great Book, biding me read that, and offering me to lend it. I admir'd at this ſtrange method of anſwering, that inſtead of replying, when he was preſt by my Reaſons, he could think it a competent ſatisfaction to tell me, he would lend me a Book to Read. Whereupon I preſt him for a poſitive Reply to my Diſcourſe, telling him, that ſince he had now Preach't a Doctrine, pretended to be Chriſt's, ſo many years, it was incredible he ſhould not be able to give*

an account of his Faith, and the Ground it was built on, without the aſſiſtance of a Voluminous Book; the toſſing over which I ſaw was very convenient for him, to avoid anſwering, and to turn our Diſpute into an endleſs Wrangling, (which was all he aym'd at) but never to bring the point to any Iſſue. He ſtill inſiſting upon my Reading that huge Book, I deſir'd him to turn to any particular place in it, which he would undertake, gave an Anſwer to my former Diſcourſe, and I would be contented to excuſe him, and conſider what it ſaid. But it would not be granted; ſo that I ſaw plainly, this was onely an invention to ward the blow from himſelf, and let it fall upon another. I preſt him again, to make out to us by Grounds of His, *he could be abſolutely certain of any one point of Faith, nay, even that Chriſt was God. He reply'd, he believ'd it, becauſe it was in the Creed. I could have told him, the* Socinians *grant thoſe words in the Creed, and yet deny Chriſt to be truly God; but I wav'd this, and urg'd him to declare upon what inerrable Rule he believ'd what was contain'd in the Creed. Upon this, to avoid anſwering, he began the moſt diſingenuous cavil that ever man heard; and fell upon me*

as if I believ'd not the Creed my ſelf; whereas I onely preſt him to ſhow us by His *Grounds, or by any Rule of Faith proper to* Proteſtants, *as they are diſtinct from* Catholics, *how* He *could rationally believe even the Creed to be certain, and know the certain ſenſe of it, ſince it's Letter is as liable to miſconſtructions as the Scripture is. I could do no leſs than tell him, how unhandſome this procedure was, to put upon me without the leaſt ſhow of reaſon or common ſenſe, a thing that never yet was ſaid or thought of any* Roman Catholic *in the World. But he with much heat, ſtill inſiſted, that I did disbelieve it, becauſe I urg'd him to ſhow how by* His *Principles* He *did or could believe it; and fell into a high paſſion. Upon which perceiving plainly, that all this pother and duſt was rais'd, to get clear of diſputing, and deſpairing to bring him to give any account of his Faith, even ſo much as pretending to ſhow it to be as true Faith ought to be,* Infallibly certain, *I came away with the young man, he having firſt declar'd before Mr.* T. B's. *face, that he was fully ſatisfi'd, he could give no account of his Faith, and conſequently was not to be follow'd: and upon this became a* Catholic.

Theſe

These things having past on in this manner here related, as soon as I saw a Paper from him, to the young man, which here follows, I durst have sworn it had been some Account of the Certainty of his Faith, in regard that was still incumbent on him, having been left in so great a passion about that Point at our last Interview. But, it seems it was too hard a morsel for his tender skill to nibble upon; and instead of that, other points, though never so remote, are fetcht in by head and shoulders to keep off that discourse. How ill he handles these too, will appear by the following Answer. But all these diversions shall not serve his turn. That *is, the point about which our Discourse was* then, *'tis* that *which stuck on his side; 'tis* that *concerning which he yet owes satisfaction; and consequently, 'tis* that *to which with all right and reason, I must still demand an Answer, and challenge him to run the Lists if he do not perform it.*

Mr. *T. B.*'s PAPER To *J. W.*

PRESTON, Aug. 3. 1686.

Poor Soul,

IT is now more than ſix Weeks ſince I obſerved your Apoſtatizing from our Church; during which time, I have not been remiſs in praying for your Recovery; and now think it ſeaſonable, by this ſhort Paper, to endeavour it.

The pretended cauſe is, you cannot obtain ſatisfaction among us, about thoſe two points, *Tranſubſtantiation* and *Purgatory*, (but moſtly the former.)

Your Soul being (in my opinion) in great danger by the courſe you take, I could not (with any quiet) ſee you ſo expoſe your ſelf; and wiſhed that you might rather beſtow your thoughts, on what more immediately touched you, and was more ſuited to your Capacity: But ſeeing it verified in you (which is in moſt perſons) that you are moſt buſie about what leaſt concerns you; and

nothing pleaſeth your Fancy, but what flies above your Underſtanding. I purpoſed to let you know my thoughts (even) in the remote queſtion of *Tranſubſtantiation*; of which, if you make good uſe, I ſhall proceed to the latter.

Yet I deferred the thing, till I could learn, that the Perſon on whoſe Ability you lean, (*viz.* Mr. *G.*) was returning from *London*, that he might be near at hand to furniſh you with Anſwers; to the intent I ſhould not be calumniated, as a Deſigner to ſurprize and lurch you.

Wherefore I now ſend theſe few Lines, to deſire you to provide your ſelf of a ſatisfactory reſolution about this Queſtion, or let me receive intimation how that ſatisfaction doth ariſe. I abridge you not of liberty to conſult with any other perſon that may add any thing to Mr. *G.* for I love Truth, and am loath you ſhould be carried away with Falſhood: and nothing will more content me, than to receive an Anſwer of weight to this Paper; which ſhall (at this time) onely touch a few doubts, many more being reſerved to be propoſed when theſe are cleared.

At preſent I muſt tell you, 1. What you are (or muſt be) taught to Believe. 2. How

hard

hard it will be for you to Believe what you ſhall be ſo Taught.

In the former, I'll note the Doctrines Taught, and the Method of Teaching them. The latter, *viz.* the Method, I begin with.

That you may believe, your Mind muſt be abſtracted (as much as poſſible it may) from the judgment of your own Senſes. Now this method will be hard for you to ſubmit to, when you conſider that it is about their proper object, and your Senſes duly diſpoſed to give their judgment; and the common Senſes of Mankind concurring with yours.

But yet this will be yet harder to digeſt, ſeeing this new method is directly contrary to the method which Chriſt uſed to inſtruct *Thomas*; which was not to abſtract his Mind from the judgment of his Senſes, but to employ his Mind about the judgment of his Senſes. The method alſo of St. *John*, is not to abſtract from the judgment of the Senſes, but he appeals to the judgment of the Senſes, to beget and confirm Faith. Hence therefore the firſt Queſtion will ariſe: *John* 20. 27. 1 *John* 1. 1.

1. *Queſt.* Why the method of your new Teachers, is ſo oppoſite to the method of Chriſt and his Apoſtles?

Now to the Doctrines taught.

Three things moſt admirable are effected in the *Euchariſt*, by the words of Conſecration, which the Catholick Faith believes and confeſſeth without any doubting.

1. That the true Body of Chriſt, even the ſame which was born of the Virgin, and now ſits in Heaven at the right hand of the Father, is contained in the Sacrament.

2. That no ſubſtance of the Elements remains in it.

3. That the Accidents which are perceived by the Senſes, are, in a wonderful and inexplicable manner, without any ſubject matter: the ſubſtance of the Bread and Wine are ſo changed, that they wholly ceaſe to be; but the Accidents (even all of them) of the Bread and Wine, you may ſee and perceive, which inhere in no ſubſtance, but conſiſts by themſelves. The proof of this follows.

Now the words of Chriſt are ſo plain (in this matter) that none in his ſound mind can be ignorant, what he muſt underſtand when he hears, *This is my Body.*

Alſo the words of *Paul* are plain, 1 *Cor.* 11. *Let a man examine*, &c. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation*

nation to himself, not discerning the Lords body. For what need is there of such weighty words, if there were nothing in the Sacrament, but a memory and sign of Christ's Passion, as Hereticks teach? The same thing *Paul* more at large explained in these words: *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communication of the blood of Christ?*

You hear the Doctrine and the Proof of it from Christ and *Paul*; now for the explication of these words, to make out the proof.

These places of Scripture, must be so explained by the Pastors, and this must chiefly be taught, that nothing of doubtfulness or uncertainty is left (of what was above said) especially when the Authority of the Church of God hath interpreted these things: the knowledge of which we attain two ways. 1. When we consult with the Fathers who flourished from the beginning of the Church, and so downward. 2. When we see the contrary Opinion condemned.

This Doctrine thus proved by Scripture, and the Scripture they explained you must believe. Now to shew how hard it will be for you to believe this, these following Questions are proposed.

1 *Quest.*

1 *Queſt.* Whether the words of Chriſt being Spiritual, it may not ſuffice to take them in a Spiritual Senſe, but it be neceſſary to take them in the literal ſenſe of his natural body, and that without a Figure?

2 *Queſt.* Whether the firſt Article be not ſufficiently believed, when the Body of Chriſt is believed to be really truly preſent, even the ſame Body, but not in the ſame manner?

3 *Queſt.* Whether the ſecond and third Articles be of equal Truth and Certainty with the firſt, and muſt ſo be believed?

4 *Queſt.* Whether the words cited for proof, are intended to prove all Three Articles equally, or the Firſt only, and the Second and Third are left to ſhift for themſelves?

5 *Queſt.* Whether every one in his wits can ſee ſuch inforcement in the words of Chriſt or *Paul*, without the eſpecial helps of the Churches Authority and the Fathers?

6 *Queſt.* If not, then whether Reaſon willeth that not the Church in the Apoſtles time, ſhould be principally heard in this Authoritative Interpretation?

7 *Queſt.* Whether you are truly taught that we Hereticks ſay, That in the Sacrament there is nothing elſe but a Memory and a

Sign

Sign of Chriſts Paſſion? And whether the Fathers that prove there is ſomething more, and condemn ſuch as ſay there is nothing more, do prove any thing againſt us, or do condemn us?

I ſhould now think it reaſonable, to requeſt of you to return to us, until theſe difficulties be overcome. But if Mr. *G.* will not yield to this requeſt, then I pray you, improve all your intereſt with him for ſome ſatisfaction for your ſelf and me, what is his true and ſerious ſenſe of this whole matter, and put him to it on his own behalf in this manner, *viz.*

Sir, ſeeing *if I eat unworthily, I eat judgment to my ſelf. If I diſcern not the Lords Body in eating, I eat unworthily. If I diſcern not the very ſame Body form'd in the Womb*, &c. *If I diſcern not accidents without a ſubſtance*, &c. *I diſcern not the Lords Body.*

Therefore, that I may be confirmed, I beſeech you aſſure me concerning your ſelf, who are ſtrong in Faith, whereas I am but weak. Your ſelf, who know your own intention in Conſecrating, whereas I know it not. Your ſelf, who have looked upon and examined the Elements that they are not corrupted, whereas I have not. Your ſelf, who have uttered the words of Conſecration, whereas I perhaps,

heard

heard not, perhaps underſtood not. I ſay, That you your ſelf are ſo right in your wits, as to perceive no doubt, nor uncertainty in this matter, but that you do fully, abſolutely, and without reſervation, forever renounce all your part and hope in the Body and Blood of Chriſt, if this Sacrament now by you Conſecrated, be not the very ſame natural fleſh and natural Blood, which was formed in the Virgins Womb, hung upon the Croſs, was buried, aroſe, and now ſits at Gods right hand; but is ſo changed, that upon the ſpeaking of the words, here's no more ſubſtance of Bread and Wine, but the Smell, Colour, Form, and all other Accidents of Bread and Wine are truly remaining, without any ſubject matter for them to remain in. That your Eyes, Noſe, Hands, Palate, do deceive you in their judgment about the ſubſtance, but at the ſame time, do not deceive you about the Accidents of Bread and Wine.

I beg that you will preſs him for a clear reſolution of the former Queſtions, and this laſt eſpecially, as touching himſelf, and tranſmit it to me; which ſhall ever be acknowledged your kindneſs to me, as well as juſtice to your ſelf. *T. B.*

An

AN ANSWER To the fore-going PAPER.

SIR,

I Received a Paper of yours, to which you require a *Satisfactory* Answer, and desire earnestly of your Friend to *press* me for a *Clear Resolution*. I must in the first place acknowledge very heartily, that you are the most civil Adversary I ever yet met with: For, you are so far from *attacking* me rudely, or *pressing* me with any *Argument*, as other brisker Disputants use, that you do not so much as attempt to *offer* any, nor scarce advance one single Proposition; nay, not so much as put down your own Tenet expresly: Which certainly is the most civil way of *Disputing* that ever was heard of, if indeed it may be allow'd that Name, and

ought not rather be call'd a *ſaying juſt Nothing*; all your performance in this Paper, being (as you here tell us) to *touch a few Doubts*; and I muſt confeſs, you *touch* them very gingerly; I ſuppoſe, leſt being *preſt*, they ſhould diſcover their *ſoft* temper.

Your gentile way of ſetting upon me, is to *ask me Queſtions*: I will not object the Proverb, That a *Fool may ask more Queſtions, than a Wiſe man can anſwer*; for it neither ſuits with you nor me. Not with *you*; for, by proceeding in this method, you ſhew your ſelf a deep Politician, and keep out of the reach, nay out of the poſſibility of a Confutation: ſince no man living knows how to take hold of an Adverſary, who *affirms* nothing himſelf, but onely *asks* another. Onely I muſt ſay, this way of handling Controverſie, by *Catechizing* your Adverſary, inſtead of *Arguing* againſt him, is an invention ſo pleaſant and ſurprizing, ſo new and ſo unheard of to the dull World hitherto, that you have all the right and reaſon in the World to get a Patent for it, that none may uſe it without your Licenſe. Nor will that Proverb ſute with me; for I hope you are well ſatisfied, you ſhall never fail of an An-

ſwer

ſwer from me, when you produce any ſubſtantial proofs, ſince you ſee I have that reſpect for you, as to undergo here, for your ſake, the drudgery to ſweep down your very Cobwebs.

Now, your Arguments being ſo perfectly unconquerable, (for they are altogether inviſible) it was but reaſon you ſhould ſay, that no leſs than *an Anſwer of weight to this Paper*, would content you. Though I cannot comprehend the Myſtery, why the Anſwer needs be ſo *weighty*, when there is nothing but a few *feathers* and *ſtraws* in the counterballance; yet I muſt ſeriouſly grant, that 'tis in ſome caſes requiſite, that Queſtions ſhould be askt when the Adverſary's Tenet is not well underſtood; that ſo the Arguments may not be wrong levell'd againſt ſome poſition, which perhaps he neither holds nor maintains: For this gives the Arguer a right aim, and makes clearer way for the future Diſpute. But, alas! your modeſt way of arguing has no ſuch high ambition; for, you tell us here very clearnedly, *This Paper ſhall onely touch a few Doubts, many more being reſerv'd to be propos'd, when theſe are clear'd.* So that for any thing I ſee, or am to expect,

your intention is onely to go on *asking Questions* to the end of the Chapter, and so turn the *Controverſie* into a meer *Catechiſm*, conſiſting onely of Queſtions and Anſwers; onely you provide wiſely, that your ſelf bear the eaſier and more honourable part in the Dialogue, and aſſuming to your ſelf the mageſtical Office of the *Catechiſt*, make me the poor ignorant Catechumen, to be pos'd at your pleaſure.

But I beſeech you, Sir, (that we may be a little ſerious) what needs this fluttering about with *Queſtions*, and other frivolous pretences, as if you were ignorant what I held about *Tranſubſtantiation*, or what the perſon concern'd, is to hold for Faith? You know well enough before-hand, 'tis already publickly extant in the Council of *Trent*; ſo that you might have ſav'd all this ſleeveleſs labour, and have fallen to work with your Arguments, to combat its Definition in this particular point. If you overthrow that, you reduce *J. W.* and make a Proſelyte of me too; if you do not, we both ſtand where we were, and all your feeble Talk is utterly inſignificant. This Council is received, as to matters of *Faith*, by the whole diffuſive Body

dy of all thoſe particular Churches in Communion with the *Roman*, and proceeds all along upon the Rule of Catholic Faith, *Tradition*. If you will go to work like a Controvertiſt, you ought to impugn her and us by Scripture, interpreted by as great Authority, proceeding upon that Rule, or ſome other more certain: for all Arguments of leſs weight, cannot with any ſhew of Reaſon, pretend to ſhock her or the Faith ſhe recommends; and all your other Proofs (had you any) would be but running voluntary diviſions upon your own Fancy. If then you have the leaſt hope to gain credit to your explications of Scripture, which are contrary to hers, it were adviſable you ſhould firſt ſhew evidently to the World, what *Natural Means* you have above the whole Body of the Roman Catholic Church, enabling you to underſtand Scripture better than ſhe does: Or, if you pretend to *Supernatural* Gifts above her, ſhew us ſome Supernatural outward Teſtimony, certifying us of this inviſible qualification you lay claim to. If you do either of theſe, you will do wonders; but I am ſure, and your ſelf is conſcious, you are ſo utterly unable to manifeſt that your ſelf,

or

or the Proteſtant Church have either of theſe advantages above the Catholic, that, as it was never attempted, though it would moſt highly avail your Cauſe, could you compaſs it, ſo the very going about it, would ſhame the Attempter. And, unleſs you do this, what man in his wits will believe you underſtand Scripture better than that Great and moſt Learned Body of the Roman Catholic Church? This being as abſurd, as to think a man may compaſs an End better without better means; that is, as to that degree which is *better*, without means. This is your Duty, Sir, if you hope to gain any credit to your Cauſe, or would ſhew your ſelf a Controvertiſt: But I perceive you have been ſo accuſtomed to Preaching, where you have your full ſwing in the Pulpit, to talk on any faſhion againſt the abominable Papiſts, without any to controul you; that you have conceiv'd ſome hope the ſame will paſs in Controverſie: Wherefore I muſt take the freedom to tell you, 'tis the duty of a Controvertiſt, to propoſe his or his Adverſary's Tenet clearly, and ſtate the Queſtion between them; and then bring his Proofs, and vouch them to be Concluſive. This is what becomes

comes a Man, and a Scholar; and what falls ſhort of this, though it may paſs, (and perhaps with applauſe) in a *Sermon*, is perfectly ridiculous and inſignificant in a *Controverſie*. But 'tis high time now to remember the drudging Service I promiſed you.

Paſſing by then your old ſaying, that the Perſon ſeeking ſatisfaction about Tranſubſtantiation *leaſt concern'd* him; as if it were nothing to him, whether he Ador'd a piece of Bread *with* Chriſt, or Chriſt *alone*, I come to your *Stuff*; for I want another proper word to call it by, being forbid by common ſence to call it *Reaſoning*.

You give us a taſte of your Philoſophy, in ſpeaking ſo ſoberly of *the Judgment of Senſes*, *our Senſes giving their Judgments*, and many other expreſſions of the like nature. By which you ſeem to make account a man's Judgment lies in his Heels or Toes, or his Wits in his Elbows; for all theſe have Senſe: And, according to this new Scheme of Philoſophy you have enlightned the world with, the *Senſe judges*. I wiſh, for your own ſake, you had onely askt Queſtions here too; for you are as miſerably out in your Philoſophy, as in your Divinity. As

to

to this whole buſineſs then, you may pleaſe to receive theſe few Inſtructions from a Friend. 1. That the Senſes are onely Organs or Inſtruments to tranſmit Impreſſions to the Brain, and ſo to the Soul, onely which *judges* or *knows*: and if the way to the Brain be intercluded, no knowl edge is produc'd by any impreſſion on *Senſe*. 2. That if the Senſes be duly diſpos'd, 'tis granted they ſend right impreſſions thither. 3. That 'tis granted, *à fortiori*, that if the Senſes be not vitiated by ſome Diſeaſe, or Miracle do not intervene, they never give our Judging Power wrong Advertiſements concerning their *proper* Objects. 4. That, in our caſe they are employ'd about their Proper Objects, which are certain Accidents or Qualities, as all Philoſophers agree: Nor are they in our caſe fallacious in repreſenting them. Now you would make *Subſtance* their Proper Object, and would have them inerrable in *judging of Subſtances*: Of which Poſitions, the firſt is utterly falſe, ſince all Learned men in the World agree, that *Subſtance* or *Being* is the proper Object of the *Underſtanding*. The ſecond is confuted by experience; for we ſee that in debaſed Money (for example)

and

and many other Inſtances, even *all* the Senſes may deceive us in our judging of the Subſtance of it by their Impreſſions; ſo that we are forc'd to call to our aſſiſtance the Maxims of our Reaſon, and uſe our beſt Art to frame a right Judgment in ſuch caſes. 5. Amongſt thoſe Knowledges, of which, in our caſe, the Faithful are to make uſe to judge rightly of the Subſtance; the Knowledge that God has revealed, 'tis his Body, and that this is atteſted by his Church, proceeding on an inerrable Rule of Faith, deriving down to us Chriſt's Doctrine, is to be taken in for one, nay ought to have the chiefeſt Place; and, ſo, in due reaſon ought to reſtrain the Faithful from judging of this high Myſtery, according to the ordinary methods of Nature in other common Natural Effects. 6. That Faith comes by *Hearing*; which Senſe, employ'd about Sounds articulated, and complext with an almoſt infinite variety, I could (were the place proper) demonſtrate to be more certain, than all the reſt of the Senſes put together; unleſs perhaps the Eyes employ'd about the various figuration of Letters. So that you ought not to have impos'd upon us, to deny the Certainty of *all* the Senſes, but to have excepted

that of *Hearing*, converſant in the Objects now ſpoken of; eſpecially (as the Scripture tells you) this being the proper Senſe by which *Faith comes*, you ought in juſtice to have let the World know, that we allow indeed the abſolute Certainty of that Senſe which introduces *Faith*, and deny only the Certainty of ſome of the reſt in ſome Caſes, and in Objects which are not *proper* to them: this being indeed the true ſtate of our Tenet. Now, if *Hearing* alone can teach us Chriſt's Doctrine with a perfect Certainty, 'tis neither good Manners to his Infinite Veracity, nor Juſtice to ſuch a vaſt Body of Atteſters, nor in any regard common ſence to truſt the more fallacious Senſes, eſpecially, not employ'd neither about their Proper Objects, before the more certain one, employ'd about it's, aſſuring us God has ſaid it. Remember the Check St. *Thomas* had, for not believing upon the Teſtimony of others, to be credited as to their veracity (that is, not admitting *Faith* propos'd and aſcertain'd to him by *Hearing*, but he would needs uſe the other Senſes too) *Beati qui non viderunt & crediderunt*, and apply it to your ſelf.

7. You diſtinguiſh not between the Senſes,

ſes employ'd about the Motives antecedent to Faith, and about the Myſteries of Faith, as appears by your Citations out of Scripture. In the former, it becomes God's Providence to leave Nature to its free courſe, and us to judge according to its ordinary methods, in regard we have as yet no other Light to walk or judge by. But when once through *Hearing* we are enlightned by Faith, it becomes then God's Providence, that the Myſteries propos'd to us (they having a nearer approach to an Infinite Agent, the Omnipotence of God, than Natural Productions have) ſhould be ſo ſublime, as to be above the reach even of unelevated *Reaſon*, much more above the common and coarſe methods of Senſation, or the Judgments we frame from the Senſes alone. Pauſe upon theſe particulars, and apply them, and you will ſee you are quite out in what I conceive you *would be at*; for you *are at* nothing yet but at asking Queſtions.

But you divide your Text, and tell *J. W.* firſt, *What 'tis he muſt be taught*; and (ſecondly) *How hard it will be to believe it.* Then, as to the former, you ſeem to ſubdivide it into the *Doctrines Taught*, and *the method of Teaching them.* Now *the Doctrines*

taught, was the *Genus* or Thing to be divided, and here you ſeem to make it one of the *Species* or Members dividing; and ſo make it at once *above* and *under* it ſelf: But this is onely a ſlip of your Logick, *noting* (as you call it) *the Doctrines Taught*, as one of the things to be conſidered in *the Doctrines Taught*. And, certainly, ſuch a rare *Note* is well worth the marking.

By what's ſaid above, the Reader will ſee, what a heedleſs Quoter of Scripture you are, though it be your beſt or rather onely Talent. You alledge againſt us, 1 *John* 1. v. 1. where the firſt words are, *Quod audivimus*, *That which we have heard*; as if we forbid you to uſe your *Hearing*, by which *Faith* comes. For it is evident beyond all need of Proof, that as the Church *heard* Chriſt, ſo if every ſucceeding Age had follow'd what they *heard* from the former, Chriſtian Faith muſt have continu'd till now the ſelf-ſame the Apoſtles heard from Chriſt; and, as long as this Method (call'd by us *Tradition*) is follow'd, it muſt ever continue ſtill the ſelf-ſame to the Worlds End. Now we are ſo far from bidding you not follow the Advertiſements of your Senſes, that our onely

Quarrel

Quarrel to you is, that you relinquiſht the moſt certain *Senſe*, the *Hearing* your Lawful Paſtors in the Church you left, and fell to ſcan Myſteries of Faith by the leſs-certain ones, employed about Objects not within their cognizance, and (which is as abſurd) Gloſſing Scripture-Texts, without any Rule to guide you, but your own aukward Fancies.

Next follow in your Papers, the *Doctrines taught* with Proofs, which properly and directly belong onely to the firſt Article, *viz.* That the True Body of Chriſt is contained in the Sacrament. But ſuch as your ſelf will never be able to diſprove, *viz.* the Scripture interpreted by the Church, the Teſtimonies of Fathers witneſſing the Tradition of the Church in their time, and the Condemnation of the contrary Opinions denying the Real Preſence, and *Tranſubſtantiation*, as Heretical.

What ſhould move you thus to ſhew the weakneſs of your own Cauſe, which has no other Rule of your Faith, but Scripture interpreted by every man's Private Spirit or Reaſon, and can bear no proportion with that of the publick Interpretation of the Church, atteſted by the Authority of the moſt

moſt Eminent Fathers of the Primitive Times, and ſtrengthned by the Condemnation of the contrary Hereſies, I cannot eaſily imagine; but finding them too ſtrong to be combated by ſo weak a Champion, you fairly take leave of them, and betake your ſelf to ſhew in the next place, after your faſhion, that is, blindly, how *hard* it will be to believe this Doctrine by *asking* us *Queſtions*. And I muſt confeſs, 'tis moſt inſuparably hard, if *Senſes* muſt be admitted to *Judge* of the hidden and moſt abſtruſe Myſteries of Faith, which is your darling Method; though any wiſe man would think, this would turn *Faith* into *Experimental Knowledge*, and ſo rather deſtroy all the Faith in the world. But my Task is ſet, and I muſt attend to your Queſtions.

To the firſt then I anſwer, That the words, *This is my Body*, are to be taken *Literally*, and yet the *End* of receiving, is meant *Spiritually*: And, I farther ſay, That this *Spiritual Nouriſhment* conſiſting in raiſing in us devout Affections, is incomparably advanc'd by the *Real Preſence* of Chriſt's Body and Bloud: So that theſe two are ſo far from being inconſiſtant, as you would hint, that the taking the words *Literally*, does exceedingly con-

conduce to the *Spiritual* feeding on Chriſt; even as far as the believing him really *preſent*, is more apt to ſtir up Devotion in us, than the not believing it; or the receiving his *Real Body*, is above the receiving *a piece of Bread* ſignifying it, which is beyond all proportion.

To the ſecond Queſtion, I anſwer affirmatively, If we regard the point of the *Real Preſence* preciſely: For we grant, that *'tis ſufficient to believe the Body of Chriſt is really truly preſent, even the ſame Body, but not in the ſame manner.* 'Tis the very Doctrine of the Council of *Trent* it ſelf, *Seſſ.* 13. *cap.* 1. That the Body of Chriſt is in Heaven, *juxta modum exiſtendi naturalem* (according to its natural manner of exiſting) and yet that 'tis in other places, *Sacramentaliter præſens*, preſent Sacramentally. But I much fear you are not in earneſt here, when you ſeem to yield 'tis *really truly preſent*, but that this Kindneſs of yours, will grow cold, when it comes to the trial; and that theſe hearty expreſſions will dwindle away into Chriſt's Body, being here onely in a *Sign*; which is to ſay, the *Sign* is *there*, and his *Body abſent*. Hollow words are but wind, and 'tis hard to graſp Air.

To

To the Third, asking whether the Second and Third Article you put, be of equal Truth and Certainty with the Firſt, I anſwer, That I was never taught to believe a thing as a half-Truth, or a three-quarter Truth, but all to be True, (for Truth conſiſts in an Indiviſible) which the Church has expreſly declared to be of Faith, by a General Council; and accordingly, whatſoever the Church thus believes, and propoſes as an Article of Faith, I abſolutely believe and embrace as Truths delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles.

To the Fourth I anſwer, as above, That the Proofs you ſet down, belong properly and directly only to the firſt Article. And as for the Second and Third, they may alſo ſhift well enough for themſelves, for any Authority or Reaſon you have brought againſt either the one or the other. But I would gladly know, how all your Faith will ſhift for it ſelf, having nothing to keep it from ſinking into an inferiour Aſſent (call'd *Opinion*) nay into a maſs of ſenceleſs Errours, as far as it oppoſes *Tradition*, but your ſelf, and other Fallible Interpreters like your ſelf to buoy it up.

As

As for your Fifth, I know no *enforcement* that is beyond Cavil in any one place of Scripture which is Dogmatical, while the words are left to be toſt by Criticiſms, Grammar-learning, Alluſions of places to one another, and ſuch like little tricks. No one word in thoſe Sacred Books can eſcape being equivocal or double ſenc't, while the word [*God*] which of all others ſhould ſeem incommunicable, is Wier-drawn by ſuch ſhifts to ſignifie a *Creature*, as we experience in the *Arians* and *Socinians* gloſſes upon thoſe Texts which concern Chriſt's Divinity. You know well enough already, that neither my ſelf, nor any Catholic builds our Faith upon any Text of Scripture, interpreted by our own private Fancy, but onely by the publick Tradition of the Church.

Your Sixth asks, *If the Church muſt be taken in to expound Scripture, whether Reaſon willeth not, that the Church in the Apoſtles time, ſhould be principally heard in their Authoritative Interpretation?* I anſwer, In caſe you mean the Apoſtles were of greater *Authority* than their Succeſſors, 'tis granted: But if your Queſtion relates to the *Truth*

of what the Church delivers, 'tis the ſame as to ask, whether the Holy Ghoſt, that aſſiſts the Church, ſpake truer one time than another.

Your Seventh Queſtion, whether you are truly repreſented, by putting you to ſay, *There is nothing elſe in the Sacrament, but a Memory and Sign of Chriſt's Paſſion; and whether the Fathers that prove there is ſomething more, and condemn ſuch as ſay there is nothing more, do prove any thing againſt you, or condemn you.* I am heartily glad to ſee ſome glimmering hope of your Converſion: For in caſe there be in the Sacrament, *ſomething more than a Sign*, as you ſeem here to acknowledge is your true Tenet, you muſt ſay the *thing ſignify'd* is there too, and ſo we are good Friends. But, becauſe this unexpected Confeſſion of yours, like the firſt News in a *Gazette*, *needs a Confirmation*, I beſeech you to ſatisfie me clearly, what this *Thing* is in the Sacrament, which is *more*, or *more than a Sign*: This way of *queſtioning*, is the worſt way of *explaining* in the world, though it be a ſpecial ſtratagem to avoid Confute.

Your

Your Propoſals that follow, are very Extraordinary. I little thought that when you had done *Catechizing* me, you would put me to *Swearing*; nor that, when I expected *Arguments* from another, I ſhould be forced to take my *Oath* my ſelf, that my Faith is true. But that you may have no cauſe to complain, I will gratifie you in that too, and do here frankly declare, without any Equivocation (which I abhor in an Oath) that I do renounce all my hopes of Heaven, (which is more than you put me to) provided there be no fault in the matter, nor in the Prieſt, if there be not preſent in the Sacrament, after the words of Conſecration, Chriſt's very true Body, which was born of the Virgin, ſuffer'd on the Croſs, was buried, aroſe, and now ſits at God's right hand, and this by the Converſion of the whole Subſtance of the Bread into his Body, as alſo of the Wine into his Bloud, the Species onely of Bread and Wine remaining, as is declared in the Council of *Trent*, Seſſ. 13. Can. 2. But now, Sir, having done this, take notice, that I muſt in requital challenge from you the ſame deep Proteſta-

teſtation, that your *Negative* Faith or Opinion is True. If you refuſe, ſince your exacting it of me, has made it decent, equitable, and juſt, you are convinced to be a very ill man, and to doubt of the Faith you profeſs to hold your ſelf, and propoſe to others as the way to Salvation. And, if you do it, yet acknowledge your own Interpretations of Scripture, and your Churches too (which grounds all your Faith) to be Fallible, you are one of the boldeſt and raſheſt Swearers that ever called himſelf a Chriſtian; and in either caſe, muſt loſe your credit for ever with your Flock and Auditory.

But that we may draw to a Concluſion, I beſeech you, Sir, if you have any more to ſay to me, let's have no more of this trifling. Conſider what you are about: you are about Controverſie, whoſe work it is to ſettle Chriſtian Faith upon certain Grounds; and ſince you profeſs your Faith to have been taught by Chriſt, this is requir'd of you, if you have any ſuch Faith to ſettle, or Grounds to ſettle it on. Go to work like a Scholar, and do not thus expoſe your ſelf for Chil-

Children to laugh at. Lay your Principles firſt, then draw your Conſequences; warrant them rightly deduc'd, and bring them to the Concluſion, or the Poſition that is contradictory to your Adverſaries Tenet. 'Tis manly to affirm confidently what one holds heartily; 'tis becoming a Man to argue againſt your Adverſary ſmartly, and not to ſpare him: but 'tis the height of ridiculouſneſs, to task him only with Queſtions, and putting him to make ſacred Proteſtations, inſtead of combating him with your Reaſons: Whenas you knew well enough before-hand, what he holds, and what he would Anſwer. One thing I muſt needs re-mind you of at parting, becauſe I fear you will be apt to forget it; which is, that you bear in memory the Oath you owe me, that your Tenets are True; that is, That Chriſt's True Body is *not* in the Sacrament, That there is *no* Third or Middle State called Purgatory, *no* Tranſubſtantiation, *&c.* Then to uphold the Opinion of your Sincerity, let us know what Certain Grounds you confide in, to ſecure you from

from being Perjur'd. The taking this Test, may qualifie you in time for some great Office; for if your Fallible Principles, will justifie your Honesty in taking such an Oath, I do not know what you may not be fit for next.

FINIS.

10.° pacquet contenant 7 pieces

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2. a Discourse of Penal Laws
3. a Letter to the vindication of Ecclesiastical Commissioners
4 The Parliament of Paris's proceedings on the Pope's Bull
5 A Seeker's Request touching the belief of the Lord's Supper
6 A Short and plain way to the Faith
7 Vox Cleri pro Rege, or the Rights of the Imperial Sovereignty of the Crown of England